

# START A TEAM

## GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED



### What is Destination ImagiNation?

Destination ImagiNation, Inc. is an extraordinary non-profit organization that provides educational programs for students to learn and experience creativity, teamwork and problem solving. Every year, we reach 100,000 students across the U.S. and in more than 30 countries. Destination ImagiNation, our core program, is an educational program in which student teams solve open-ended Challenges and present their solutions at Tournaments. Teams are tested to think on their feet, work together and devise original solutions that satisfy the requirements of the Challenges. Participants gain more than just basic knowledge and skills—they learn to unleash their imaginations and take unique approaches to problem solving.

**2010-11**

# Where Do I Start?

1. **Learn about Destination ImagiNation as an international AND a local program.** Start by reading this guide and visiting our Web site at [www.IDODI.org](http://www.IDODI.org).
2. **Meet with interested prospective team members and parents.** Included in this guide is a sample agenda for a Destination ImagiNation Informational Meeting.
3. **Identify the School/Organization Contact Person:** Once you decide to participate, identify the person who will be the Destination ImagiNation School/Organization Contact Person.
4. **Purchase a Team Number at [www.ShopDI.org](http://www.ShopDI.org):** There are different types of Team Number packages: 1-Team Pak, 5-Team Pak, Institution Team Pak and Rising Stars! Team Paks. For more specific information about the types of Team Number packages, visit [www.ShopDI.org](http://www.ShopDI.org) or see the Team Pak section of this guide.
5. **Receive and/or Download Program Materials:** Once your payment has been received and processed, a book of printed materials will be mailed to you and you will have access to the Resource Area on [www.IDODI.org](http://www.IDODI.org).
6. **Register with your Affiliate:** When you purchase your Team Number, your Affiliate will be notified of your purchase. Your Affiliate Director will contact you about how to register within your Affiliate and your Region. You will also be sent information about trainings and other Affiliate-sponsored activities.
7. **Review all of the DI Program Materials.** The *Program Materials* include *Rules of the Road*, *7 Team Challenges*, *1 Rising Stars! Challenge*, *Instant Challenge Practice Set* and *Team Manager Guide*.
8. **Register all of your teams for Regional and/or Affiliate Tournaments:** Some Regions and Affiliates ask that you register online, others send registration forms. Contact your Regional and/or Affiliate Director for the registration requirements for your Tournament.
9. **Have Fun!**

## Destination ImagiNation (DI) Cheat Sheet

### Who

DI features teams of up to 7 participants each. Our participants range in age from Kindergarteners through University-level students. Each team needs an adult Team Manager.

### What

Teams develop solutions to *DI Team Challenges* and *Instant Challenges*. They present their solutions at Tournaments.

### When

Each season takes place from September through May. Teams typically spend three months developing their *Team Challenge* solutions and practicing *Instant Challenges*.

### Where

Teams practice wherever they can find space, so they practice in living rooms, garages, classrooms and similar locations! Additionally, teams also learn and experience creative problem solving.

### Why

Teams participate to have fun and meet new friends! Additionally, teams also learn and experience creative problem solving.

### How

You can use this guide to understand what your child will be doing in DI, and should you need any help, you can contact DI Headquarters at [askDI@dihq.org](mailto:askDI@dihq.org) or 856.881.1603.

# Program Overview

## Educational Goals of the Program

Destination ImagiNation is a community-based, school-friendly program that builds participants' creativity, problem solving, and teamwork in enjoyable and meaningful ways. The goals of Destination ImagiNation are for participants to:

- Foster creative and critical thinking.
- Learn and apply Creative Problem Solving method and tools.
- Develop teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills.
- Nurture research and inquiry skills, involving both creative exploration and attention to detail.
- Enhance and apply written and verbal communication and presentation skills (both impromptu and sustained).
- Promote the recognition, use, and development of many and varied strengths and talents.
- Encourage competence in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to real-life problem solving.

## Methods

- Young people of similar age work on teams of up to 7 members over an 8-12 week period.
- No Interference is allowed from anyone outside of the team.
- Adult Team Managers act as facilitators to a team.
- Team Manager training is provided by experienced trainers in all Affiliates.
- Problem solving skills are cultivated by using Tools.
- Teamwork is developed by using the eight building blocks for successful teams.
- Creativity is appreciated by *Team* and *Instant Challenges* that are open ended.
- Individual and team strengths are promoted by Side Trips based on Multiple Intelligence Theory.
- *Instant Challenges* engage participants in rapid-fire critical thinking.
- *Team Challenges* engage participants in sustained problem solving.

## Assessment

- Tournaments are a celebration of what the team HAS accomplished and the PROCESS learned.
- Solutions are evaluated and Reward Points are a component of *Instant* and *Team Challenges*.
- Appraisers are trained to reward the PROCESS that the team has experienced.
- *Tournament Data Forms* provide opportunity for teams to culminate their experience.
- Special Awards are given for exceptional creativity, teamwork, and innovation.
- At the end of the Destination ImagiNation season, teams have an active reflection time.

# The Two Components of the DI® Program

The Destination ImagiNation program asks teams to creatively solve two different kinds of Challenges, each with its own purpose and educational focus. The two Challenges, or components, are called the **Team Challenge** and the **Instant Challenge**. Teams present their solutions to both Challenges at a Tournament where the solutions are evaluated by friendly people we call “Appraisers.”

## Team Challenge

The Destination ImagiNation *Team Challenge* is a Challenge teams work on over a long period of time, usually several months. This year, Destination ImagiNation presents seven *Team Challenges* (six competitive Challenges and one Rising Stars!® non-competitive Challenge), and each team generally chooses one Challenge to solve. The *Team Challenge* is made up of two parts, the **Central Challenge** and **Side Trips** (except for a yearly Improvisational Challenge, which does not include *Side Trips*).

### Central Challenge

- Purpose: Encourages development of creative problem solving techniques, teamwork, and creative process over a sustained period of time (usually several months).
- Educational Focus of *Central Challenge*: The project undertaken by the team is academically based and focuses on one or more of the following areas: Technical/Mechanical Design, Structural/Architectural Design, Science, Theatrical/Literary/Fine Arts Elements, Community Service and Improvisational Techniques.
- Each of the five competitive *Central Challenges* involves a research component.
- One or more of the five competitive *Central Challenges* involves an improvisational component.
- One or more of the *Central Challenges* involves an international and/or intercultural theme.

### Side Trips

- Purpose: Encourages participants to discover and showcase their collective interests, strengths, and abilities as a team and as individuals, and allows them to develop that showcase over a long period of time.
- Educational Focus of *Side Trips*: Based on the educational theory of multiple intelligences, which in part emphasizes allowing participants to find their own best ways to present what they have learned.
- Allows teams total freedom to develop elements of their own choosing.
- Allows teams to highlight areas of strength that are not brought forth in the *Central Challenge* requirements.
- Allows and encourages teams to recognize and make the most of each individual’s abilities/interests.

### Instant Challenge

The Destination ImagiNation *Instant Challenge* is a Challenge that teams are asked to solve in a very short period of time at their Tournament, without knowing ahead of time what the Challenge will be.

- Purpose: To put the team’s creative problem solving abilities, creativity, and teamwork to the test in a short, time-driven Challenge.
- Educational Focus of *Instant Challenge*: The team’s use of creative problem solving strategies, assessment and use of available materials, and teamwork under tight time constraints.
- Encourages teams to develop creative problem solving and time management strategies, performance and improvisational techniques.
- Develops the ability to quickly assess the properties of provided materials, and learn how to creatively manipulate materials for a unique solution.

# Who Participates in Destination ImagiNation?

Teams of up to seven members from kindergarten through college age participate in Destination ImagiNation. All receive the same Challenge packet, which has six competitive **Team Challenges** and one non-competitive Rising Stars! **Team Challenge**. Teams in the “competitive” Levels – Elementary, Middle, Secondary and University – choose any of the six competitive **Team Challenges**. Each team’s solution will vary greatly – not simply because of age grouping but mostly due to the innovation and imagination of the creators.

Each team has a Team Manager of Record, 18 years of age or older, who may be a parent, teacher, or other interested adult. Team Numbers are issued to individual teams, individual schools, homeschoolers and community-based programs.

## Forming Teams

A team consists of at least two and no more than seven members. Only those seven may work on the solution to the *Team Challenge*, may perform the solution and may participate in the *Instant Challenge* part of a Tournament.

When forming teams, keep in mind that all teams will need individuals who have talents and abilities in very diverse areas such as building, welding, soldering, sewing, designing sets, designing costumes, writing scripts, composing and performing music, just to name a few. Teams will also need individuals who have the ability to generate ideas and those who are able to categorize, sift and choose criteria to make the solution work. They need people who can generate many ideas and options for their solution. They also need people who can focus on the many ideas generated and choose those that are considered the best, most unique and useful for their solution.

Teams should have members who are willing to commit their time and energy to the development of the solution and to each other through thick and thin. There are definitely times when things can get thick! If teams do not have the skills they need, those skills may be taught. Resources (e.g., human, books, journals, videos, etc.) may be used to help teach the skills to team members. However, the team may not be taught skills specifically tailored for application to their *Team Challenge* solution. Team members must learn the skills apart from their solution, and then apply their new skills when they work towards the development of their solution.

Team members do not have to be the same age. However, the Level in which the team will compete is determined by the age of the oldest child OR the highest grade Level.

## Determining your Team’s Level

| LEVEL                 | GRADES (US)   | OR | AGE  |
|-----------------------|---|----|--|
| Elementary Level (EL) | Kindergarten-5th grade  |    | No student reaching age 12 by June 15, 2010* |
| Middle Level (ML)     | 6th-8th Grade   |    | No student reaching age 15 by June 15, 2010* |
| Secondary Level (SL)  | 9th-12th Grade  |    | No student reaching age 19 by June 15, 2010* |
| Rising Stars!         | The Rising Stars! <i>Team Challenge</i> is designed for Preschool-2nd grade. See next page.   |    |  |
| University Level (UL) | Full-time post-secondary students enrolled in college, university, trade, or technical school or military. High school seniors bound for higher education. See next page. |    |  |

# Timeline for the DI Program Season

**DI Team Challenges are designed to be solved in a period of eight to sixteen weeks.** Depending on the team and the complexity of the solution they decide to create, a team may need more or less time than that.

DI teams go through five Process “Stages” as they work their way through the Challenge and compete at the Tournament. On the chart below you will find the basic sequence of the Stages, the major developments that take place, and the **approximate** amount of time the team will be in that Stage.

Keep in mind that solving DI Challenges is never a “textbook” process: Problem solving is a messy and somewhat unpredictable business! Stages may overlap, sometimes a team may seem to slip back to an earlier Stage, and often one Stage will “dissolve” into the next without a clear end to one and start of another.

## Team Manager

Each DI team needs an adult Team Manager to be in charge of meetings, planning, team registration, Tournament logistics and team safety. Team Managers are in high demand and are key to the success of any DI program, and while most are volunteers, some receive stipends or some degree of compensation for their time. A DI Team Manager:

- Has a good sense of humor.
- Appreciates creativity and innovation in all its forms.
- Enjoys working with children and young adults.
- Is interested in helping young people learn about creativity, teamwork and problem solving.
- Wants to join the DI community and share with other caring adults.
- Has a positive and friendly attitude.

The degree of a Team Manager’s involvement will depend upon the team’s schedule, Tournament progression, and the overall goals and needs of the team. In any case, the team does the real work – the problem solving – and the Team Manager facilitates the process, which allows the team to have the best educational experience possible.

## Finding and Supporting Team Managers

Some Coordinators find Team Managers through an Informational Meeting held for parents, potential participants, administrators, teachers, and other interested people. Some have said they find Team Managers by asking parents if they would “work together with the team.” Team Managers could be:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Administrators
- College students
- Team member’s older brother or sister
- Community members
- School paraprofessionals

## Team Manager Training Workshops

Destination ImagiNation, Inc. provides training instruction and help to Regions and Affiliates so that they can present great Training Workshops for the Team Managers and Coordinators. Check with your Affiliate and/or Regional Director for information regarding Training Workshops. The importance of these training sessions cannot be emphasized enough.

# Coordinating a DI Program Season

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>September/<br/>October</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase a Team Pak from Destination ImagiNation, Inc. for the Destination ImagiNation program.</li> <li>• Register with Affiliate organization.</li> <li>• Conduct a Destination ImagiNation Awareness program for Team Managers, parents, and team members.</li> <li>• Identify Team Managers.</li> <li>• Recruit participants.</li> <li>• Join Regional organization if necessary.</li> <li>• Make sure teams are in the correct Level of competition.</li> <li>• Register Team Managers for Team Manager Training Workshop and/or attend yourself.</li> </ul> |
| <b>October/<br/>November</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase a Team Pak from Destination ImagiNation, Inc. if you haven't yet.</li> <li>• Register with Affiliate organization if you haven't yet.</li> <li>• Organize your approach and support materials.</li> <li>• Organize meeting schedules.</li> <li>• Register Team Managers for Team Manager Training Workshop and/or attend yourself.</li> <li>• Pass Affiliate and/or Regional newsletters and information to teams.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>November/<br/>December</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase a Team Pak from Destination ImagiNation, Inc. if you haven't yet.</li> <li>• Register with Affiliate organization if you haven't yet.</li> <li>• Register each team for the Regional or Affiliate Tournament.</li> <li>• Pass Affiliate and/or Regional newsletters and information to teams.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>January</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review carefully any information sent from the Affiliate office!</li> <li>• Recruit parents and volunteers for Regional Tournament. (You may need to do this earlier if your Regional is in January.)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>February</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check to make sure all Regional, Affiliate, and Destination ImagiNation Team Number and Tournament fees have been paid.</li> <li>• Organize transportation to Tournament.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>March</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Tournament (some occur as early as January!)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>April</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for closure Celebration with team, parents, Team Managers, etc.</li> <li>• Affiliate Finals Tournament.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>May</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Finals Tournament.</li> </ul>  |

# About the Tournament

## The Destination ImagiNation Tournament

The DI Tournament is a culminating celebration of what the teams have learned throughout the year. It celebrates their teamwork, creative problem solving, time management and the skills they have learned on the way to their Challenge solution.

### What is a Tournament?

A DI Tournament is not apart from the process; it is A PART OF the DI process.

A Tournament:

- is the celebration of every team's solution, regardless of their score.
- is fair and consistent.
- has officials who understand and honor the DI process.
- considers every team a winner.

When we say every team is a winner, what do they win? They have won the ability to:

- have self-confidence to generate options.
- learn to take focused risks.
- make decisions with efficiency.
- take action with a positive outlook.

The DI process is not just for kids! One of the great benefits for adults who are participating in DI, whether as Team Managers or as officials, is the opportunity to learn the same skills DI teaches the young people on teams.

So the Tournament is not just a celebration for the teams: it is a celebration for everyone, adults as well as children, at the Tournament. Throughout the year, we have ALL become winners. We are... DI!

**The Regional Tournament:** Most Affiliates that are states or provinces are divided into Regions headed by a Regional Director. Generally, every Region within a given Affiliate holds a Regional Tournament. Often the Regional Director is also the Tournament Director and runs that Regional Tournament with a "Tournament Team" of volunteers from all over the Region. How the Region and Affiliate is organized is unique to every Affiliate. Your Affiliate Director can tell you to which Region you have been assigned.

**The Affiliate Tournament:** Whether or not an Affiliate is divided into Regions, every Affiliate holds an Affiliate Finals Tournament. In Affiliates which hold Regional Tournaments, the Affiliate Finals Tournaments take place after all Regional Tournaments are completed. In Affiliates where there are no Regional Tournaments, the Affiliate Finals Tournament is generally the only Tournament held in that Affiliate. Affiliate Finals Tournaments are run by a "Tournament Team" that may include the Affiliate Director, members of the governing Board of that Affiliate, Regional Directors, Affiliate Challenge Masters, and others.

At any Tournament, a large number of people are needed to be *Team Challenge* and *Instant Challenge* **Appraisers**, people who will evaluate the *Team* or *Instant Challenge* solutions. Each *Team Challenge* has at least seven Appraisers. Each *Instant Challenge* room requires two to four Appraisers, and there are generally several *Instant Challenge* rooms at a Tournament. To have a well-staffed Tournament, a lot of volunteer effort is required. You can see how important it is to be ready to be involved and help the Team Managers and especially parents to understand the level of cooperation and help that is needed!



# TEAM PAKS

## 1-Team Pak

1. The 1-Team Pak allows a school, school program, college, university, community group, home school program, parent group, club or business to put together one team of no more than seven participants. 1-Team Paks do not need to be affiliated with a school or group.
2. The 1-Team Pak entitles a given team to participate in a Team Challenge at any Level defined within the Destination ImagiNation program structure. There are no restrictions on how a team is selected or assembled. Team members may come from within a community or beyond.

## 5-Team Pak

1. The 5-Team Pak allows an individual school, multiple schools with a total combined enrollment of fewer than 500 students, multi-school programs with a single itinerant teacher, or a recognized local chapter of a community organization that serves children (such as Boy Scout Troops and Girl Scout Troops, 4-H clubs, or PTA/PTOs) to put together up to five teams in any *Team Challenge* at any Level.
2. 5-Team Paks must be affiliated with a school or group.
3. The 5-Team Pak may not be purchased on behalf of school districts, states, provinces, program Affiliates (e.g., the New Jersey DI Affiliate), or any larger parent organization (e.g., Boy Scouts of America).
4. If your team is part of a 5-Team Pak, make sure that your team is the only team competing under your assigned Team Number. Each team must have a distinct Team Number.
5. The 5-Team Pak entitles each of the five teams to participate in a *Team Challenge* at any Level defined within the Destination ImagiNation program structure. Each team must be registered with Destination ImagiNation, Inc., and each team will receive a unique *Team Number* and a set of printed materials.

## Institutional Customer 30+ Team Pak

1. To be classified as an Institutional Customer, the customer must be a centralized school system (e.g., school district) or a recognized local chapter of a community organization that serves children, such as Boy Scout Troops and Girl Scout Troops or 4-H clubs.

2. An Institutional Customer must purchase a minimum of thirty (30) teams.
- a. After the initial purchase of 30 teams, the Institutional Customer may purchase additional teams, in any quantity, at the Institutional price. The Institutional Customer may distribute the *Team Program Materials* to any team for which is it fully responsible.
3. A Destination Imagination state, province or country Affiliate program (e.g., the New Jersey DI Affiliate) cannot be an Institutional Customer.
4. An Institutional Customer may purchase a 1-Team Pak or 5-Team Pak for a specific school within their district, but these purchases can only be used as indicated in the 1-Team Pak and 5-Team Pak rules.
5. If your team is part of an Institutional Customer 30+ Team Pak, make sure that your team is the only team competing under your assigned Team Number. Each team must have a distinct Team Number.
6. Each team that is part of an Institutional Customer 30+ Team Pak is entitled to participate in a *Team Challenge* at any Level defined within the Destination ImagiNation program structure. Each team must be registered with Destination ImagiNation, Inc., and each team will receive a unique Team Number and a set of printed materials.

## Rising Stars!® Team

1. A Rising Stars! team can participate using a Team Number from a 1-Team Pak, 5-Team Pak or 30+ Team Pak.
2. The Rising Stars! team package allows a school, school program, college, university, community group, home school program, parent group, club or business to put together one team of participants. However, Rising Stars! Teams need not be affiliated with a school or group.
3. The Rising Stars! team package entitles a given team to participate in the current season's Rising Stars! *Team Challenge* defined within the Destination ImagiNation program structure. There are no restrictions on how a team is selected or assembled. Team members may come from within a community or beyond.
4. The Rising Stars! team package does not include the full set of program materials; however, it does come with a set of tools and activities appropriate for early learners.
5. A Rising Stars! team can participate using a Team Number from the 5-Team Pak or 30+ Team Pak.



Questions:  
Email: [AskDI@dihq.org](mailto:AskDI@dihq.org)